

# WINTER 2023 Alumni Columns

Northwestern State University Magazine







**Dr. Marcus Jones**  
1992  
President  
Northwestern State  
University

Dear Alumni,

The NSU family has suffered a number of difficult losses and several significant ones in recent months. When reflecting on the lives of those who have left us, it is often evident that many carried with them a special connection to Northwestern State, whether through memories of their student days or their years-long professional dedication to the university or the people they met and worked with at NSU. Northwestern often leaves indelible marks on those who pass through its gates.

Many of us begin a new year by mapping out goals for the next 12 months and how we intend to reach them. At NSU, we are focusing on recruiting top students, supporting our faculty and developing partnership with external stakeholders to support programs in business, nursing and the STEM fields. We continue to evaluate our programming to stay responsive to the job market and how NSU can help address shortages in our region and throughout Louisiana.

I wish you all the best for 2023. Thank you for all you do for Northwestern State University.



**Danielle Antoon Cobb**  
2010  
Director of  
Alumni Affairs

Dear Alumni,

It's always a pleasure to receive notes or messages from alumni, as well as former faculty and staff, and we love to hear stories about your experiences at Northwestern State. We are also proud to highlight what you all are doing in your professional fields and your communities, so we invite you to send us those updates and keep in touch. You never know who you might connect or reconnect with through the NSU family network.

Speaking of networking, NSU recently launched an alumni business directory to support entrepreneurs and small business owners. You can read more about on page 1.

Following a whirlwind fall semester and holiday season, the Alumni staff is preparing to hit the road to visit you in your hometowns. Check out the back cover of this magazine for a schedule of Alumni After Hours events where we hope to see with many of you. If you have a suggestion or would like to sponsor a Northwestern State event in your area, please get in touch with us so we can offer assistance.

I will close with a word of thanks for the support you have shown to NSU and for the encouragement you have shown me. I hope to see you soon.

[northwesternstatealumni.com](http://northwesternstatealumni.com)



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John Evans ..... Natchitoches, 1992  
LaTasha Gray-Grant ..... Mansfield, Texas, 2007  
Emilyn Horton ..... Natchitoches, 1987, 1993, 2001  
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Gail Jones ..... Natchez 1981, 1998

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Publisher ..... Danielle Antoon Cobb, 2010  
Editor ..... Leah Pilcher Jackson, 1994, 2011  
Contributors ..... David West  
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Photography ..... Chris Reich, 2007, 2009  
Design/Layout ..... Daphne Hines, 1982, 1984

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## Do business with Demons through Alumni Business Directory

Northwestern State University's Office of Alumni and Development is launching an initiative to support and promote businesses owned by NSU alumni. Business owners are invited to visit a web page to submit information about the business and products and services offered, including non-profits.

"This began as a way to help our business-owning alumni and support their entrepreneurial endeavors by letting the NSU community know who they are, where they are and what they have to offer," said Danielle Antoon Cobb, director of Alumni Affairs. "We are also offering business owners the option to offer discounts to other NSU alumni."

Cobb said a webpage has been

created that invites business-owners to provide information about their business, along with graphics, logos and social media platforms.

Listings on the page do not represent an endorsement by the Alumni Association, nor will any financial support be provided by the Alumni Association. All businesses and listings are subject to review and posted at the discretion of the Alumni Association.

The new business directory could strengthen the NSU community by informing graduates of the businesses in their area and provide networking opportunities.

"It encourages alumni to support their fellow Demons in the cities where



they live, work and shop, or through on-line interaction" she said.

The Alumni Owned Business Directory can be accessed at [northwesternstatealumni.com/add-alumni-business/](http://northwesternstatealumni.com/add-alumni-business/). See FAQ at end of page for more information.

### On the Cover

## NSU Food Pantry gets big community support before holidays

Northwestern State student volunteers hosted a drive for the NSU Food Pantry prior to the end of the fall semester. Donations of non-perishable food items, toiletries and other necessities were dropped off, not only from the NSU family, but also from several community organizations and corporate partners.

The NSU Food Pantry was created by students who identified a need to combat food insecurity on campus where students often struggle with financial challenges. The Pantry serves all NSU and BPCC@NSU students free of charge offering non-perishable food items, toiletries, cleaning supplies, kitchen tools, cutlery, sanitizer, personal hygiene products and other items.

The Pantry has been a vital resource when students were financially affected by COVID-19, multiple damaging weather events and other unexpected expenses. The Food Pantry is located on the south side of Trisler Power Plant across from Magale Recital Hall on NSU's Central Avenue and is organized in the manner of a mini-convenience store. The Pantry is staffed by more than 50 students, faculty and staff who volunteer and participate in training on the importance of courtesy and confidentiality.

Donations to the Food Pantry are always welcome. Monetary donations are also accepted through the NSU Foundation. Donors can visit [northwesternstatealumni.com](http://northwesternstatealumni.com) and support the NSU Food Pantry in the Make A Gift section by specifying the NSU Food Pantry.

Pictured on the cover are, front row from left, Jesus Bravo, Nick Knotts, Braxton Basco and Christopher Richard. On the second row are Anna McMillon Jessica Pitcher, A.J. Prevot, Kacy Young, Bailey Thomas and Taylor Spitzer. On the back row are Michael Barnes, Ethan Nash, Bryce Tipton, Rose Vincik, Victoria Rodrigues, Ty Robin and Riley Stern.



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Ladell Conley



Dr. Steve Horton



Phil Kidd

## Conley, Horton, Kidd named to CAPA Hall of Fame

The Mrs. H.D. Dear Sr. and Alice E. D. Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts added three new members to its Hall of Fame for 2022.

The 2022 honorees are long-time School of Creative Performing Arts Administrative Assistant Ladell Conley, Executive Director of the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts Dr. Steve Horton and the late Phil Kidd, a member of the Department of Theatre and Dance faculty. They were inducted in a December ceremony.

Conley was a staff member at Northwestern State for 42 years and worked in the School of Creative and Performing Arts for 35 years.

"If you needed help, Ladell was the 'go to' person in the CAPA office," said Director of the School of Creative and Performing Arts Emeritus Bill Brent. "I could not have asked for a better administrative assistant. She was really organized with all day-to-day paperwork that was required to keep the school running smoothly. Ladell was often the first person at the office each morning at 7 a.m. and frequently the last person to leave in the afternoon."

Brent said Conley "contributed in so many ways beyond the requirements of her written duties." She assisted more than 40 faculty members, nearly 500 academic majors in the School

of Creative and Performing Arts and more than 400 non-majors who participated in band, choir, orchestra and theatre and dance.

Brent credited Conley with being a vital part of the success of the Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band. She handled travel arrangements for the 300-member band. She often traveled with the band to handle any emergency situations that might arise. Conley would sew uniforms that needed repair and oversaw the distribution and return of band uniforms prior to and after all marching band performances.

For many years, Conley managed ticket reservations for four Christmas Gala performances for children which helped to ensure that more than 4,000 elementary school aged children from the region were able to see the Gala each year.

Horton earned bachelor's degrees in journalism and secondary teacher education from Northwestern in 1988. He earned an M.S. in journalism in 1990 and the Ph.D. in vocational education/communication in 1998, both from Louisiana State University. He returned to Northwestern in 1989 as an instructor of journalism and served in various positions on the campus, including director of Alumni Affairs, head of the Department of

Journalism, dean of the Graduate School and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He ended his tenure at Northwestern in July 2016 as chief academic officer, dean and professor of Education when he was named executive director of the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts. He continues to teach part-time for the University.

In 2017, the former Mr. NSU was inducted in the Hall of Distinguished Educators at NSU; in 2020, he was named Leadership Professional of the Year for the Louisiana Council for Exceptional Children; in 2021 was named an Alumnus Advisor of the Year for Kappa Sigma Fraternity, and in 2022 he was named to the inaugural Greek Life Hall of Fame at NSU.

"Throughout Steve's career in academia, he has been a sought-after journalist because of his ability to communicate messages that are responsive and relevant," said Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Greg Handel. "His contributions to the Department of New Media, Journalism and Communication Arts are seen from NSU-TV to the radio station, to the Current Sauce. His connections to the profession have led to speeches, speech writing and assisting university presidents, political hopefuls and future and



## Theatre scene studio named for Phil Kidd



The naming of the Phil Kidd Scenic Studio was made official Oct. 30 with the unveiling of a sign designed by student Drew Davis and Professor Robert Richoux, pictured at left. There are still a few pieces of Kidd's art available, including drafts, sketches, doodles and projects from his art classes. Keepsakes from some of the more popular pieces will be created to raise additional funds. Proceeds go to the Phil Kidd Memorial Scholarship, which friends and family hope to endow at the \$10,000 level to benefit student theatre technicians. Individuals interested in purchasing artwork can contact Richoux at [richouxr@nsula.edu](mailto:richouxr@nsula.edu). Donations can be made to the Phil Kidd Scholarship at [www.northwesternstatealumni.com](http://www.northwesternstatealumni.com) and designate the gift for the Phil Kidd Scholarship.

current journalists. His publications are numerous, but his gifts lie in his promotion of the profession, and his furthering of the journalistic integrity necessary for those in the profession. He is a champion of media and its embrace of contemporary perspectives, of experiential learning for students, and for faculty across all disciplines."

Kidd began his career at NSU in 2002 as the theatre shop foreman for the NSU Theatre and Dance program. In 2003 he moved to the position of assistant professor of theatre and the director of technical theatre where he continued to be integral in the growth of the program. Before retiring in 2020, he had designed sets for over 30 NSU Theatre/Dance productions and was technical director for just as many productions. He also worked on many other shows as a charge artist, technical advisor, shop foreman, props master and any other role thrown at him. In his almost 20 years of service, he was a dedicated faculty member, a caring and giving mentor, a passionate teacher, a gifted artist and a dear friend. He touched the lives of all who worked and "played" with him. For many, he was a father figure, to some he was the "cool uncle." He was an excellent teacher, being patient, kind, tough, tireless, passionate, demanding, inspiring and protective. He brought out the best in his students and gave

them the courage to take risks and to fail and to try again.

"Phil was a great teacher, mentor and friend," said Director of Production and Design, Technical Theater Robert Richoux, who was a student of Kidd and later a colleague. "He knew that each student learned differently and would adapt to the style of teaching that was best for that student. Phil was always there for you as a student or a graduate. I would always call Phil at random times to ask a question and he would always answer. I knew he had taught me well when those phone calls happened less and less."

Richoux said Kidd knew how to treat students as equals but in a way

that they still understood he was the teacher, and they were the students.

"I believe my graduating class had a much different experience than other classes, because we started here when Phil started which meant we were new to the university and so was he, which seemed to give us a closer connection," said Richoux. "Phil was always there for you and was a giver. He was selfless and always wanted to deliver on promises. Phil will be in our hearts forever and will be missed."

Kidd passed away in February 2021 after a lengthy battle with cancer. To honor him, the Department of Theatre and Dance named its scene shop in his memory.

## SAVE *The* DATE

*Northwestern State University will host a luncheon to honor this year's Distinguished Communications Professionals on Friday, March 17 in the Student Union Ballroom. Later that day, the NSU Foundation will host Flavor of Louisiana, the popular annual seafood extravaganza that raises funds for student scholarships. Look for more details soon.*



The 2022 inductees into Northwestern State University were honored during a induction luncheon and program Oct. 21. From left are Carlos Treadway, Lola Dunahoe, Gail Jones, Tynes Hildebrand, Tommy Chester and Dr. Johnny Cox. Induction into the Long Purple Line is the highest honor the university bestows on alumni.

## Long Purple Line induction highlights Homecoming festivities

Northwestern State University honored six alumni by inducting them into the University's alumni hall of distinction, the Long Purple Line, as part of Homecoming festivities Oct. 21. The individuals were recognized during an annual luncheon and induction program with friends, family and supporters in attendance.

The 2022 inductees are Tommy Chester and Lola Dunahoe of Natchitoches, Dr. Johnny Cox of Coushatta, Tynes Hildebrand of Shreveport, Gail Metoyer Jones of Natchez and Carlos Treadway of London, England.

During his induction remarks, Treadway announced the creation of the Carlos Treadway Family Scholarship, initiated with a \$15,000 donation to the NSU Foundation. The scholarship will benefit minority students from central Louisiana.

The NSU Alumni Association also presented three individual honors.

Kimberly Martin of Houston was recognized as Volunteer of the Year. The Volunteer of the Year award is annually

presented to an individual who demonstrates an exemplary record of volunteering time, talents and service to the NSU Alumni Association and is actively involved with a chapter, alumni interest group, affiliate program, NSU Alumni Board or other forms of volunteer service to NSU.

Dr. Lamar Bryant of Knoxville, Tennessee, was recipient of the Young Alumnus Award, which recognizes those who have demonstrated an early record of distinguished service

to NSU and a continued interest in serving the university as a volunteer, donor or advocate. His wife Kattina accepted the award on his behalf.

John Manno received the Distinguished Service Award. That award is presented to an NSU alumnus with a long history of distinguished service to Northwestern and continued interest in serving the university

in his/her life as a volunteer, donor and/or advocate.

The Long Purple Line luncheon and induction kicked off a weekend of festivities at NSU that included the Homecoming parade, pep rally, football game and several reunions.



### LONG PURPLE LINE

HALL OF DISTINCTION





Kimberly Martin was named the Northwestern State University Alumni Association's Volunteer of the Year. NSU President Dr. Marcus Jones presented the award.



Dr. Lamar Bryant was named this year's Outstanding Young Alumnus. Accepting the award on his behalf was his wife Kattina Bryant.



John Manno was named recipient of this year's Distinguished Service Award, which recognizes a Northwestern State University graduate who has a long history of service to the university as a volunteer, donor or advocate.



Three ADs: Immediate past athletic director Greg Burke, left, and current athletic director Kevin Bostian were on hand to honor former AD Tynes Hildebrand at the Long Purple Line induction.

## Scholars' College names 2022 Distinguished Alumnus



John Dillon of Athens, center, was named the Jimmy D. Long, Sr., Louisiana Scholars' College Distinguished Alumnus of 2022. Dillon was recognized during Northwestern State University Homecoming festivities Oct. 22 and congratulated by LSC Director Dr. Tyler Travillion, left, and Dr. Margaret Cochran, professor of ecology and mathematics, right. A 1997 graduate of the Scholars' College and teacher of English at Minden High School since 2006, Dillon was named Best Teacher in Webster Parish in 2020. He is also an expert on Louisiana birds, president of the Louisiana Ornithological Society and on the Board of Directors at Briarwood Nature Preserve. Dillon's breadth of interest and depth of knowledge across his distinguished career exemplify what it means to be a LSC Distinguished Alumnus.



This year's Hall of Distinguished Educator honorees were, from left, Lisa Blakeway Lohman, Dr. Patsy Sanson Jenkins, Sheila Cole Warner, Emilyn Horton, Dr. Bob Gillan and Walter "Willy" Paz. The group was honored with a reception and induction program held in conjunction with the university's Homecoming festivities. Earlier in the week, Paz was surprised by family and friends as being honored with a scholarship in his name.

## Five inducted in to Hall of Distinguished Educators

Six outstanding educational professionals were honored at a reception and induction ceremony at during Homecoming festivities. Criteria for selection include: 1) graduating from NSU with an undergraduate or graduate degree in Education; 2) have a minimum of 30 years of service in the field of education and 3) made significant contributions to the field of education at a local, state, national, or international level.

Dr. Robert Gillan, 1978 Ed.D. graduate, retired faculty from the NSU College of Education designed and established the educational technology programs at the certification, master's and doctoral levels at NSU during his tenure. Gillan is a retired veteran, serving in Vietnam and continuing with the National Guard throughout his professional life.

Emilyn Horton, a 30+ year teacher and educational diagnostician, has been active in teacher preparation, teaching courses in early intervention, Mild/Moderate Special Education, and Educational Diagnostician at NSU. Horton

has three degrees from NSU including a bachelor's degree in 1987, M.Ed. in 1993, and Ed.S. in 2001. Horton currently serves as the Child Search Coordinator and Educational Diagnostician in Natchitoches Parish Schools.

Dr. Patsy Sanson Jenkins, retired from the profession after 50+ years as a classroom teacher, principal, director of elementary education, director of personnel, superintendent, and Dean/Chair of Education. Jenkins earned a bachelor's degree from NSU in 1963 and M.Ed. in 1970. Jenkins attributes much of her success to Northwestern and is proud to have multiple generations of NSU graduates in her family.

Lisa Blakeway Lohman, 2007 Louisiana High School Teacher of the Year, currently serves Vernon Parish Schools as Curriculum Director/Testing Coordinator after serving as a teacher, coach, assistant principal, principal, and supervisor. Earning a bachelor's degree in 1987 and M.Ed. in 1994, Lohman has been active professionally for 35 years and passionate about helping children and their families.

Walter "Willy" Paz, has taught tennis to students for multiple decades. Graduating with a bachelor's degree from NSU in 1976, Paz added a M.Ed. in 1995. From 1995-2006, Paz served as the NSU tennis coach while teaching in the public sector. Currently, Paz teaches tennis at St. Mary's High School and runs the Paz Tennis Center in East Natchitoches.

Sheila Kay Cole Warner, is currently serving as an instructional coach for Natchitoches Parish Schools.

Teaching for over 33 years, Warner has taught students from kindergarten to high school. She earned a bachelor's degree from NSU in 1986 and a M.Ed. in 1995.



## Former demon tennis players have Homecoming reunion

From the 1970s through the mid-1980s, the Northwestern State University Men's Tennis Team competed at some of the highest levels of NCAA Division I. From 1978-1984, a group of players developed a special bond that kept them close for over 40 years, no matter which part of the world they were living in. Five of those former players returned to Natchitoches for a special reunion where they enjoyed Homecoming festivities, the football game and reminiscing from their time at NSU.

The players along with their home country and state were Alfredo Trullenque (Chile, now Texas), Donny Lovo (Ecuador), Lytt Allen (Texas), Morris Brown (Virgin Islands, now Florida), and Francisco Acuna (Chile, now Louisiana). The players were joined by their former graduate assistant Dr. John Dollar, who retired from NSU last year after serving as professor and head of the Department of Health and Human Performance.

"The strength of the teams was based on Coach Johnnie Emmons' international level recruiting where he brought players from around the world to join the Demon squad," Allen said.

In 2020, the players were devastated to learn about the loss of their beloved Coach Emmons, so the trip back to Natchitoches was a way to pay tribute to the one who brought them all together.

The team members, along with a number of other players who could not make this year's trip, pulled together a collection of memoirs of Coach Emmons, sharing how much he made a difference in each of their lives. This tribute to Coach Emmons was presented to his wife, Mrs. Nelda Emmons and family at their home.

"A number of NSU players went on to have a professional career in or around the sport of tennis, so the NSU



From left are Francisco Acuna, Morris Brown, Alfredo Trullenque, Donny Lovo and Lytt Allen.

opportunity has had such a positive impact," Allen said.

The team also remembered one of their own from South Africa, Wynand Wessels, who lost his life a little over a year ago.

"Not only was he one of the top players on the team during his time, but he was a fun-loving teammate that everyone enjoyed hanging around with," Allen said. "This was a very special reunion, and we look forward to future gatherings."

During Homecoming, the group enjoyed tailgating, the football game and touring campus and downtown Natchitoches and gathered for a group picture at the NSU Tennis Courts.



**Dr. Vickie Gentry** was honored as Dean Emeritus of Northwestern State University's Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development. In addition to serving as dean, Gentry also served NSU as provost and vice president of Academic Affairs prior to her retirement in 2020. Dr. Gentry, center, is pictured with her family. In front are grandsons Crawford and Carson Gentry. On the back row are Cristy Gentry, Cole Gentry, Cade Gentry and Cree Roark



**Dr. Susan Campbell**, assistant professor in social work, right, was named the 2022 Teacher of Excellence by Northwestern State University's Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development. Campbell is active in teaching and scholarship. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Campbell serves as the NCAA faculty liaison for NSU's Athletic Department. Dr. Katrina Jordan, director of the School of Education, offered congratulations.

## Spotlights

### Alum wins Emmy for video on George Dawson, who learned to read at 98

Joshua Ault, a journalism and social studies teacher at George Dawson Middle School in Southlake, Texas, won a Lone Star Emmy for a video he made about the school's namesake, the grandson of a slave who didn't learn to read and write until he was 98.

Ault was recognized at an awards program in Dallas in November for the piece titled "George Dawson's Legacy." Ault, graduated from NSU in 2004 with a degree in broadcast journalism. He is a former KXAS Channel 5 reporter. He said he was fascinated with Dawson and wanted to make a video about his "amazing life."

Ault began teaching in the Carroll school district three years ago, and said he read the book "Life Is So Good," co-written by Dawson and Richard Glaubman, before he was hired.

Ault said the video also featured interviews with Dawson's great

grandson, Chris Irvin, who talked about how grateful he was to have spent time with his great grandfather. Ault also interviewed Glaubman, a Seattle teacher who heard about Dawson and went to Dallas to meet him. Glaubman and Dawson became close friends. Glaubman described accompanying Dawson to church and interviewing him about his life.

Ault went to Seattle last spring to meet Glaubman and created the video using the equipment that his middle school students also use.

"Life is So Good" tells the life story of Dawson, who was the grandson of a slave. The book chronicles Dawson's life as he left the family farm in Marshal, Texas, to find work and support his family. He broke horses and built levees on the Mississippi River. Dawson also rode the rails to see the country and



Joshua Ault, right, is pictured with Christopher Irvin, left, great-grandson of George Dawson, at the Lone Star Emmy Awards.

described how he learned to read when he was 98.

Ault said he hopes his video will encourage others and show that it is never too late to learn.

### New academic building will be named in honor of Alost



Alost Hall Academic Center

Northwestern State University will honor the legacy of Dr. Robert Alost, the 16<sup>th</sup> president of Northwestern, who led the university from 1986 to 1996, by naming the school's new academic building Robert Alost Hall. The Robert Alost Memorial Scholarship has been established by friends and family. Dr. Alost's sons were recognized on the field during the Oct. 1 football game. From left are Stan Alost, NSU Director of Development Jill Bankston, NSU President Dr. Marcus Jones, Wes Alost and Mike Alost. Friends can contribute to the scholarship by visiting [northwesternstatealumni.com/alost-scholarship/](http://northwesternstatealumni.com/alost-scholarship/).



## Robinson earns Lifetime Achievement in Education Award from the Percussive Arts Society

Anthony Robinson, a 1975 NSU graduate and member of the H.D. Dear Sr. and Alice E. Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame, was presented with the 2022 Lifetime Achievement in Education Award by the Percussive Arts Society at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) on Nov. 12 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Percussive Arts Society is the world's largest percussion organization with over 5,000 members in over 80 chapters across the United States and across the globe.

Robinson, who earned a bachelor's degree in music education, has had a successful career as an educator and musician along with military service. He spent 30 years with the Marshall (Texas) Independent School District where he was director of bands, junior high band director and assistant band director/percussion specialist. Since 1993, he has also worked as a percussion instructor at East Texas Baptist University.

An active professional, Robinson

has served as guest conductor for Louisiana's District VIII Junior High and ninth grade bands and is widely known in Texas for his service to the Texas Music Educators Associations' All State Bands and Orchestras. This service began in 1990 and has only been interrupted three times: twice for military service (Operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom) and the COVID-19 pandemic.

After retiring from Marshall in 2007, Robinson has continued teaching as a percussion specialist for bands at Pittsburg, White Oak, Henderson and Spring Hill as well as Wiley College.

He has maintained a 28-year music ministry to nursing homes and hospitals in the east Texas area. In 1995, he established the first ever Colonial Fife and Drum Corps in Marshall, the East Texas Ancients Fife and Drum Corps. The Corps led Shreveport's Holiday In Dixie parade for four consecutive years.

Robinson's military service began in 1978 with Detachment 1, 307 RED



Robinson

HORSE Squadron of Barksdale Air Force Base where he served for 17 years in Air Force Reserve. His service includes two years with the 98 Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron of Barksdale Air Force Base, one year at headquarters, 307 RED HORSE Squadron of Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio and 14 years with the 531st Air Force Band located at the NAS/JRB of Fort Worth where he was principal percussionist/first sergeant. Robinson was inducted into the CAPA Hall of Fame in 2021.

## Gauthier named Louisiana Tradition Bearer

Mestiza cultural authority Rhonda Gauthier was named a Louisiana Tradition Bearer by the Louisiana Folklife Commission and was honored in October during a program at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum in Natchitoches.

An Adeasonos and member of the Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb and president of the Ho Minti Society, Inc., Gauthier grew up outside of Zwolle.

After earning a B.A. in anthropology and history from Northwestern State, she worked in the fields of research, genealogy and history, first part-time as a cultural interpreter at Fort St. Jean Baptiste, and later as a full-time interpretive ranger at Nuestra Senora de Pilar de Los Adaes and Fort Jesup State Historic Site. Since 2000 she has worked in the Louisiana Regional Folklife program as an assistant to Dr. Dayna Lee, as an assistant to historical archaeologist Dr. George Avery in the Los Adaes Program and as community coordinator for the Creole Heritage Center. She served as the liaison for the Creole Center to the St. Augustine Historical Society, the Cane River Creole community and Creole communities across Louisiana. Her work during these years included grant writing, research,

Creole genealogy, coordinating conferences and maintaining the Badin-Roque Historic structure on Cane River Lake.

In 2005, she produced the film "Maize to Masa," which documents the Choctaw-Apache process of nixtamalization, a traditional maize preparation process the Choctaw-Apache community still uses to make tamales.

In 2008, Gauthier returned to Louisiana State Parks as an interpretive ranger until retiring in 2018. In 2021, Gauthier worked with the Sabine Parish Tourist Commission and Zwolle Depot Museum Board doing research and volunteer work to ready the Depot Museum. Research, genealogy and cultural studies have been never-ending passions. Since 1994, she has worked closely with the Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb, consulting, researching genealogy, grant writing, working with the Rising Sun Youth and serving on powwow and tribal recognition committees.



Gauthier



## Registration to open soon for ADVANCE 2023

Northwestern State University's ADVANCE Program will host its 35th session July 2 – 22, 2023. The ADVANCE Program is a three-week residential program that academically challenges and socially engages academically motivated students who are currently in 7th – 11th grades. The program's website, [www.nsula.edu/advance](http://www.nsula.edu/advance), will be updated January 16, 2023, and an online application will be available.

Catherine Karam of Arnaudville went to ADVANCE over three summers. She is currently a junior in the Louisiana Scholars' College, the honors college at NSU, where she is majoring in liberal arts with a concentration in scientific inquiry.

"My parents had discovered the program while looking for alternatives to the Duke TIP program which I had attended the summer before at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas," she said. "After reading about ADVANCE online and seeing the high praise it had received, they pitched it to me as a great opportunity for education and social enrichment; and they weren't lying!"

During the first summer in 2016, Karam took the C++ computer language class, and although she did not do as well as she had hoped she still greatly enjoyed the class and loved her teaching assistant and classmates.

"The people who run the program care about every single attendee on a personal level, making sure to guarantee everyone feels welcomed and happy," she said. "In the summer of 2018, I took psychology, which would go on to satisfy the general psychology credit I need for my current major, and this class was absolutely amazing. Professor Steve Gruesbeck made sure to keep the class engaging while teaching us the basics of psychology."

In 2019, Karam took criminalistics with Dr. Tom Tiefenwerth, which was her favorite ADVANCE course.

"Dr. Tiefenwerth was very entertaining while also teaching important criminal cases of the past century," she said.

Karam said her parents were pleased with both the education and social aspect of ADVANCE and supported her interest in attending for three years.

Angelina Wood of St. Rose was an ADVANCER every year she was eligible, starting in 2014 and has been a student worker for ADVANCE for four semesters. She learned of the program through her seventh grade English Gifted/Talented teacher after taking the ACT through Duke TIP and earning a high score. She is currently a senior theatre major at NSU and will graduate in May before studying abroad the summer of 2023. At ADVANCE, she took creative writing, mythology studies, Shakespeare/performance, film studies/horror and film studies/great actors.

"I made lifelong friends there. Three of my best friends



and I, despite all of us currently being scattered across the U.S. for college, all met at ADVANCE and continue to stay in touch," she said. "Even when we get preoccupied with our daily lives and go months without speaking, we always seem to end up reviving our old group-chats from camp."

Wood said she wouldn't be the person she is today without having attended ADVANCE. The experience gave her confidence academically and socially. She also earned enough credits through AP and ADVANCE to have a nearly completed an English minor before taking a single class at NSU.

"In my experience, students of ADVANCE almost always come back because the program is just so valuable. It can truly be life-changing," Wood said.

Children and/or dependents of NSU faculty and staff from all campuses are eligible for a \$250 tuition discount.

Students enroll in a single course for three weeks of in-depth study. They attend 108.5 hours of class and cover an entire year's worth of high school material or a semester of college level material in that three-week period.

Courses being offered include the humanities, mathematics, natural sciences with laboratory components, and computer science. By working with carefully selected instructors and teaching assistants (TAs), and limiting class enrollment to 15 students, each student is given the opportunity to attain maximum academic growth.

Applicants must submit copies of their most recent report card and state standardized test scores before they can be admitted to ADVANCE.

While the academic program at ADVANCE is top-notch, the residential program sets ADVANCE apart from other similar summer programs. The residential assistants (RAs) offer a wide variety of social and recreational activities to assist students in forming lasting friendships and strengthen the ADVANCE community.

For further information visit [www.nsula.edu/advance](http://www.nsula.edu/advance), call (318) 357-4500, or email [palmerh@nsula.edu](mailto:palmerh@nsula.edu).



**ADVANCE**  
Program for Young Scholars



## Lyles Scholarship will benefit business, nursing students

Laurence Wynder of Natchitoches is the inaugural recipient of the Mary Ann Lyles Memorial Scholarship, created to benefit a student pursuing a career in business administration or nursing at Northwestern State University or Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) - Natchitoches campus. Wynder earned a bachelor's degree in general studies at NSU in 2020 and is currently pursuing an associate's degree in practical nursing at BPCC.

The Mary Ann Lyles Memorial Scholarship was created by her sister and caregiver Bertha Davis. Lyles passed away February 19, 2016.

Davis said she initiated the scholarship because Lyles always encouraged children to get their education, whether college or trade school. Lyles was a 1967 business administration graduate of Central Area Trade School.

She was well-known in her community and, not having children of her own, treated other children like

they were her own. She was a collector of books, dishware and glassware, and after her death, Davis sought to donate as much as she could of Lyles' collection to area philanthropies and non-profits, including the Creole Heritage Center (CHC) at NSU.

"My sister always worked in service to people, and she wanted to see children get an education," Davis said. "She had a lovely personality and was a people person."

Davis said the ideal scholarship recipient would be a student with strong academic achievement and who is in need of financial help.

Loletta Wynder, retired director of the CHC and grandmother of the scholarship recipient, said she met Lyles in 1970 when they were among the first minorities to be employed at the Natchitoches Parish Old Courthouse.

"At one time, Ann was employed at NSU in the Scholarship Office. It is ironic



Laurence Wynder is the inaugural recipient of the Mary Ann Lyles Memorial Scholarship. From left are Loletta Wynder, his grandmother; Laurence Wynder, Bertha Lyles Davis, who established the scholarship in memory of her sister, and Cristy Bernard, director of Donor Relations.

that now there is a scholarship in her name," Loletta Wynder said. "Ann would be smiling now."

Friends can contribute to the Mary Ann Lyles Memorial Scholarship by visiting [northwesternstatealumni.com/lyles-scholarship/](http://northwesternstatealumni.com/lyles-scholarship/).

## Tabor Scholarship to assist students in the healthcare field

A new scholarship at Northwestern State University will help a student pursuing a degree in the healthcare field. The Tabor Family ASN Scholarship is an endowed scholarship that will be presented to a student in first-fourth level clinicals on a needs-based basis.

James and Krystyna Tabor of Shreveport created the scholarship to honor his brother Charles Tabor, a 1973 NSU graduate who was a math teacher for more than 50 years. Krystyna Tabor earned bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing at NSU and is currently on faculty in the College of Nursing at the Shreveport campus where James is an administrative assistant.

"All three of us were raised in families that taught the importance of service to others," Krystyna Tabor said. "Service to others is embedded into our chosen professions: education

and nursing. Charles was a great supporter of education as evidenced by 50-plus years of teaching service. He went above and beyond his classroom duties by setting the service example and assisting anywhere he could, including in his church and community."

Krystyna Tabor chose nursing as a serving profession and later became a nurse educator.

"When I decided to become a nurse educator, Charles was extremely happy that we would have another teacher in the family," she said. "We spent many visits discussing the teaching profession which made our bond stronger. My husband, although not an educator, has always been very supportive of our careers; so much so that when he retired, he took a position as an administrative assistant at the College of Nursing so that he could help faculty and students. When Charles passed away, we wanted to honor Charles and help struggling students, so we created the Tabor Family Scholarship.

Charles Tabor was a resident of Olton, Texas, near Lubbock, an educator in the Olton Independent School District and for several years was foster parent to boys who came from difficult home situations. The boys had different ethnic backgrounds and Tabor felt it was a calling to provide a safe home for his adopted sons, who came from difficult home situations.

Friends interested in contributing to the Tabor Family Scholarship can do so by visiting this link: [northwesternstatealumni.com/tabor-scholarship/](http://northwesternstatealumni.com/tabor-scholarship/)



## Laird to return as Demons head football coach in 2023

Brad Laird will return as Northwestern State's head football coach for the 2023 season, according to NSU Director of Athletics Kevin Bostian.

The decision was made following a 2022 season in which Northwestern State produced its best Southland Conference record in more than a decade and went into the final week of the season with a chance to win its first conference title since 2004.

Northwestern State started 4-0 in the Southland Conference for the first time since 1988 and posted its best winning percentage in the league since 2004, going 4-2 in six conference games. The 4-2 mark was NSU's first above-.500 finish in conference play since 2010.

Through five seasons, Laird is 16-35 after a 4-7 season in 2022. He holds a 15-23 mark in Southland Conference competition.

The Demons made significant coaching staff changes and welcomed 30 newcomers to the program this offseason although offensive coordinator Cody Crill, hired in January, never coached a game at NSU. Crill stepped away from the program less than two weeks ahead of the Sept. 3 season opener at Montana for family reasons.

Following an 0-3 start, the Demons won four of their next six games, putting themselves alone in first place in the Southland entering the final two games of the season.



Laird, a record-setting quarterback at Northwestern State from 1991 through 1995, held the Demons' all-time passing record for nearly a quarter century before coaching Shelton Eppler to a record-breaking, two-year campaign in 2018-19.

He served as defensive coordinator at NSU three times for a total of eight years and also was associate head coach for three of those seasons before becoming head coach in 2018.

Laird was inducted in 2015 into Northwestern's N-Club Hall of fame, the highest athletic honor at the university.

## McGee pledges support for Morgan Health Performance Center

For Terrence McGee, just coming to Northwestern State to play football was enough. Now the 2000 All-American return man is doing his part to make sure the Demons remain competitive off the field.

McGee became the latest to pledge a gift toward the creation of the David and Sherry Morgan Health Performance Center, a new athletic strength and conditioning facility that will be added to the Donald G. Kelly Athletic Fieldhouse.

McGee and the Northwestern State Athletic Department announced the donation of \$50,000 in September.

"I thought, 'If I can help out, I wouldn't mind doing so to give them a better facility.' It helps tremendously with recruiting these days," he said.

A product of Athens, Texas, McGee was a four-year starting cornerback for the Demons. In 2000, he set an NCAA record by averaging 23.7 yards per punt return. He was inducted into the N-Club Hall of Fame as part of the Class of 2020.

He remains Northwestern State's career leader in pass breakups (44) and career punt return average (17.6) while sitting in a ninth-place tie for most career interceptions (11).

The David and Sherry Morgan Health Performance Center will be constructed on the back end of the NSU Athletic Fieldhouse.

It will include a new 11,600 square foot weight room with space for more than 100 student-athletes, a 25-foot artificial turf pad, a new nutrition center, student-athlete lounge and offices for the strength and conditioning staff.

The second phase of the project will convert the current weight room into a high-tech rehabilitation center along with other sports medicine upgrades. The third phase will be the

renovation of the current Eugene Christmas athletic training room.

Contributions can be made directly to the David and Sherry Morgan Health Performance Center project by visiting [app.mobilecause.com/vf/Victorious](https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/Victorious) or by contacting Kevin Bostian at [bostiank@nsula.edu](mailto:bostiank@nsula.edu).



Action shot from Terrence McGee's Northwestern State career



## Hall of Famers reflect on championships, being pioneers

*Nobody hands you a dream.*

Those are the words new N-Club Hall of Fame inductee Melvin Howard amid thunderous applause, as he was one of the 12-member class that was inducted during the N-Club Hall of Fame ceremony Oct. 22 during Homecoming weekend.

Howard, the first African American football player in Northwestern State history, came to NSU in the summer of 1968, just months following the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy.

Howard came to NSU over offers from national powers Michigan State and Missouri.

He was one of two honorees of the N-Club Pioneer Award, joining fellow trailblazer Louise "Do" Bonin.

On the 50th anniversary of Title IX, Bonin reflected on her time at NSU and was fortunate the university had the foresight to offer women athletic scholarships.

After NSU, she has had a successful stint as both a head coach and teacher, wanting to be one from a young age and couldn't be happier with her choice.

Getting choked up during speeches was commonplace, as Bonin and former Northwestern State men's basketball coach Mike McConathy did just that.

McConathy was introducing former player Clifton Lee, who played from 2002-2006, and averaged nearly 12 points per game, including 14 points per contest as a senior.

In that senior season, he led NSU to a 26-8 record and an NCAA Tournament berth. Nicknamed "The Demons of Destiny," NSU came from a 17-point deficit to upset No. 3 seed Iowa in Auburn Hills, Michigan.

Lee was sure to give back thanks to his former coach.

While Lee was just starting his career on the basketball court, Roy Locks was just finishing up his on the gridiron.

Locks, who was being introduced by 2021 N-Club Hall of Fame member Terrence McGee, helped lead the Demons to a pair of FCS Playoff appearances during his career.

He registered 70 tackles, including



The 12-person N-Club class was inducted in the ceremony on Saturday morning, highlighted by Melvin Howard, the first African-American to ever play football at Northwestern State. Pictured are, from left, Clifton Lee, Craig Nall, David Pittman, Roy Locks and Brittany Littlejohn Bonaffons.

16.5 for loss and 10 sacks in his 2002 Southland Conference Defensive Player of the Year honor.

He also paid tribute to his friend, Ahmad Willis, who passed away earlier this month.

Willis was also linked to another N-Club inductee, quarterback Craig Nall.

Despite playing just one season in Natchitoches, Nall made the most of his opportunity.

Nall transferred to NSU from LSU, where he played sparingly for three seasons, throwing for 431 yards.

He came in January of 2001 and earned the starting quarterback spot. During his one season with the Demons, he broke the school record for passing yards (2,361) and was tied for second with 12 passing touchdowns.

One of the most memorable games in NSU history came on the road against Division I TCU, one in which Nall and Willis were right in the middle of.

Drafted in 2002 by the Green Bay Packers, he played seven years in the NFL, throwing five touchdowns and no interceptions.

Coming in one year after Nall was

David Pittman, who earned First Team All-American and All-SLC honors in 2005.

Pittman was a four-year starter, leading the Demons to two appearances in the FCS playoffs. In his four years, he intercepted 11 passes and broke up 26. He accumulated 153 tackles and scored four touchdowns, including three defensively. He was the only FCS player in the 2006 Senior Bowl.

He was selected by the Baltimore Ravens in the third round in the 2006 NFL Draft, where he intercepted a pair of passes.

While Pittman's nickname was "Pitt," it was tough to beat women's basketball's Kia "Killer" Converse in the best nickname department.

The three-time All-Southland

*continued on next page*



## Guess Who



Members of the NSU Lady Demons are pictured "looking up" to the 1976-77 on the cover of that season's media guide. *Can you name them?* E-mail your answer to [jacksonl@nsula.edu](mailto:jacksonl@nsula.edu) and include your city of residence and the year you graduated.



In the Fall 2022 edition, three special riders appeared in the 1997 Christmas Festival parade. They were Mr. NSU A.J. Kennedy, Miss NSU Celeste Emmons and Miss Lady of the Bracelet Farrah Reyna.

## Hall of Famers reflect on championships, being pioneers *continued*

Conference member and the conference's former career 3-point record holder ranks 10th in program history in points (1,464). Her 3-point school record stood until Janelle Perez broke it in 2016.

She and Jennifer Graf are the only Lady Demon basketball players to win Southland Conference championship rings as a player and a coach.

She was a three-sport standout in high school and had a decision to make, both in terms of college choice and sport choice.

She has taken what she was taught at NSU and has become a successful coach.

Tracy Rew-Hoover was the first female national champion in school history, earning the 2011 NCAA Outdoor discus championship.

Prior to signing, she was told by her mother she could only visit one school. After coach Mike Heimerman watched her at an event, she showed out and was set on attending NSU.

Brittany Littlejohn knows a little something competing on the big

stage as well, being named five-time Southland Conference hurdles champion.

She did not play her first year because she was going to college and be a 'regular kid,' but walked on as a sophomore and the rest was history.

Just like Littlejohn dominated in hurdles, O.J. King dominated on the baseball diamond.

After transferring to NSU for the 2001 season, he was named SLC Newcomer of the Year. He followed that up by being named the 2002 Southland Conference Pitcher of the Year and was a member of the Southland Conference's All-Decade Team as well.

He earned the SLC Pitcher of the Year award after posting an 8-4 record with a 2.63 ERA and 85 strikeouts in 106 innings pitched as a senior. In his Newcomer of the Year season, he went 8-2 with a 4.03 ERA and 62 Ks in 80.1 IP in 2001.

He struck out a program-record 15 batters against Lamar in 2002.

The final two also excelled on

the diamond, as Erin Mancuso and Amanda Ortego dominated for softball.

Mancuso is one of five players to earn multiple First Team All-Louisiana selections. She is third in program history for RBI (127) and doubles (44) and fourth in HR (38). In 2000, she clubbed a school-record 18 runs and drove in 49 runs.

In the circle, Ortego was lights out for the Lady Demons.

In her four years, she amassed 59 wins, which is second in school history along with a program record 687.2 innings pitched.

Along with Crista Miller, she pitched a combined perfect game against Centenary in 2001 and also proved her toughness on the diamond as well.





## Writer, humorist, NSU VP Jerry Pierce passes away Nov. 8

Jerry Pierce, who served over 57 years on staff at Northwestern State University and as vice president of External Affairs since 1990, died Tuesday, Nov. 8 after a brief illness.

Pierce's impact at the university, in the community and around the state was profound, not only as an administrator, but as a writer, humorist, ambassador, fund raiser and mentor to personnel at all levels of administration, including nine NSU presidents.

A graduate of Springhill High School, Pierce was recruited to Northwestern in 1957 as a football trainer and was a four-year letterman in that position. As a student, he was an N-Club officer and sports editor of the university newspaper. He joined the staff of The Times-Picayune in New Orleans after receiving his journalism degree in 1961 and became executive sports editor at age 24.

Pierce returned to Northwestern in 1965 as Sports Information Director. He later served as News Bureau director and assistant to the president before he was named vice president of External Affairs, overseeing NSU Athletics, NSU Foundation and Alumni Affairs, News Bureau/Media Relations, Sports Information, the Wellness Recreation and Activities Center and the NSU Recreation Complex. He worked for years with legislators and other elected officials as the university's governmental affairs representative, served as institutional representative to the NCAA and Southland Conference and was a former president of the conference. He co-chaired Northwestern's Centennial celebration and 125th anniversary activities. Pierce represented NSU as a speaker and master of ceremonies at hundreds of events across the state for decades and as host or guest on numerous radio and television shows and special broadcasts.

Pierce brought the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame to Natchitoches in 1972 and directed the program for nearly 20 years. During that time, he was named one of the 20 "Most Influential People in Sports in Louisiana" by The Times-Picayune. He played a leading role in establishing the Long Purple Line, NSU's alumni hall of distinction, and the NSU Athletic N-Club Hall of Fame and was a recent inductee into both entities. Pierce received numerous journalism awards and honors for other civic, social and professional activities.

In addition to writing and editing several decades' worth of news releases and publications at NSU, has also wrote thousands of stories and articles of all kinds for Louisiana newspapers and statewide publications. Pierce received numerous Louisiana Press Association awards for general interest columns, features, sports columns, editorials and was recognized by the Louisiana Sports Writers Association and College Sports Information Directors of America for news stories and sports publications.

Among his many other projects, Pierce was author of a book of columns published by the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives and wrote the text for the 200-page coffee table book "Northwestern at 125" commemorating

NSU's 125th anniversary. He was Northwestern's liaison for the filming of "Steel Magnolias" and "The Man in the Moon" and was co-editor of "Steel Magnolias Scrapbook" on the filming of the movie in Natchitoches.

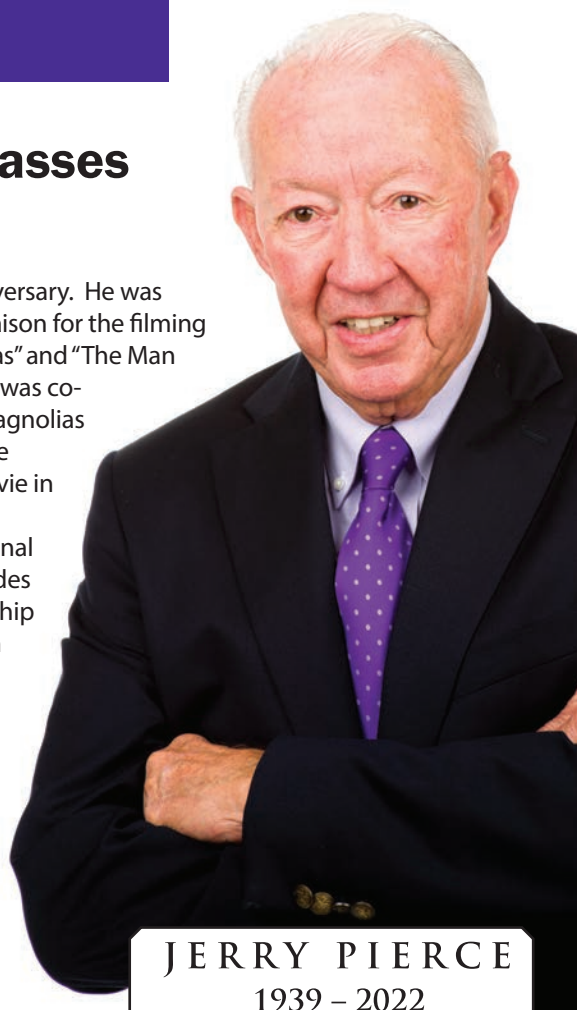
Other professional recognition includes 50-year membership awards from both the Louisiana Press Association and Council for Advancement and Support of Education and membership of Blue Key National Honor Society. He was awarded lifetime membership in the

Louisiana Sports Writers Association and was the first recipient of the organization's Mac Russo Award for contributions to the ideals and progress of the organization.

Pierce was extensively involved in civic activities in Natchitoches through the years. Among his honors and recognitions, he was recipient of Natchitoches Mayor's Award for Community Service, American Legion Natchitoches Parish Man of the Year, Natchitoches Parish Chamber of Commerce President's Award; City of Natchitoches Achievement Appreciation Award, Lieutenant Governor's Louisiana Ambassador Award, member of Chamber of Commerce first Ambassadors' Club, finalist for Chamber of Commerce Natchitoches Parish Man of the Year; Kiwanis Club member and officer; charter member of the Mystic Krewe de St. Denis; member of The Agitators social organization; Dignitaries and Publicity Committee of Natchitoches Christmas Festival and member of First Baptist Church. He served as coach and counselor for youth sports programs and on budget, publicity and publications committees. He was also an avid tennis player and was a member of USTA teams that won more than a dozen state championships, five regional titles and a national championship.

Pierce provided substantial financial support to the university and was recognized for more than 20 consecutive years of contributions to the NSU Foundation. He and his wife Regina established endowed scholarships at the university in athletics and academics.

In addition to Regina, Pierce is survived by two sons, a daughter, seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren.



**JERRY PIERCE**  
1939 – 2022

# In Memory

1955 – Eleanor Townsend Hawkins,  
Oct. 22, 2022, Lafayette

1955 – Lynelle Sue Scoggins,  
Oct. 29, 2022, Natchitoches

1955 – James A. Bailey, Nov. 19, 2022,  
Salem, Massachusetts

1956, 1967 – Archie Ray Worsham,  
Sept. 14, 2022, Coushatta

1958 – Elizabeth “Betty Lou” Huckabay  
Sullivan, Sept. 24, 2022,  
Coushatta

1959 – Joan “Kitty” Fields, Melilli,  
Oct. 13, 2022, Baton Rouge

1959 – Dr. Martha Schwab Maddox,  
Nov. 21, 2022, Newnan, Georgia

1960 – Henri Lee Kelley Rust,  
Oct. 4, 2022, Sulphur

1961 – Jerry Pierce, Nov. 8, 2022,  
Natchitoches  
*Pierce served on staff at NSU  
for over 57 years and as vice  
president of External Affairs  
since 1990.*

1961 – Bobby Wayne Maxey,  
Aug. 14, 2022, Houston

1964 – Ira Joe Key, Oct. 20, 2022, Many

1965 – Eric Rupert Nelson, Oct. 4, 2022,  
Tacoma, Washington

1965 – Amy Copeland Lord,  
Jan. 13, 2022, Baytown, Texas

1967 – Johnny Lee Smith,  
Oct. 13, 2022, Shreveport

1969 – Mariann Strange, Oct. 12, 2022,  
Alexandria

1969 – Thomas E. McCullough, Sept.  
29, 2022, Grants Pass, Oregon

1969 – Lynwood Ray Powell,  
Nov. 28, 2022, Natchitoches

1970 – Peter Troy Kendall, Dec. 3, 2022,  
Marksville

1970 – Joseph William Pope, Dec. 6,  
2022, Simpson

1971 – Ann Loraine Sims, Nov. 7, 2022,  
Shreveport

1972 – Janice “Jan” Maxine McQuillin  
Duhon, Oct. 3, 2022,  
Natchitoches

1972 – David Michael Benit,  
Dec. 15, 2021, Minden

1975 – Margaret “Margo” Haase,  
Oct. 23, 2022, Natchitoches

1978 – Thomas Bryan Roy,  
Sept. 26, 2022, Bunkie

1991 – Kervin Campbell, Oct. 27, 2022,  
Mansfield

1997 – Daphne Suzanne Butler,  
Oct. 8, 2022, Natchitoches

2003 – Ahmad Willis, Oct. 1, 2022,  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

2012 – Kimberly A. Belanger Rhorer,  
Dec. 2, 2022, Bell City

Dr. Jack Russell, Sept. 25, 2022,  
Shreveport  
*Russell was a former professor  
in the Computer Information  
Systems program.*

Raymond Strother, Oct. 1, 2022,  
Billings, Montana  
*Strother was a member of the  
faculty from 2008-2014 and  
received an honorary doctorate of  
human letters from NSU in 2009.*

Ben Davis Jr., Sept. 26, 2022, Alexandria

Dr. Richard Galloway  
*Galloway was a former dean and  
vice president of Student Affairs.*

Ruby Martin Weeks Stephens, Oct. 21,  
2022, Lake Rosemound

Dr. H.N. Towry, Nov. 24, 2022, Atlanta,  
Georgia



Dr. H.N. Towry

Former professor of business Dr. H.N. Towry was to be feted with a 100th birthday party, but passed away Nov. 24, four days prior to his birthday, whereby the planned event became his memorial service. Towry was a resident of Atlanta, Georgia, where he spent the last years of his life. He was predeceased by his wife of 70 years, Johnia Cherry Towry, and nine siblings. Towry grew up in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, joined the U.S. Army Air Corp right after Pearl Harbor and served in the Pacific theater. Soon after returning from the war, he moved his young family to Louisiana, where they remained for the next 50 years. Towry was a much-loved professor in NSU’s School of Business and very active member of the First Presbyterian Church in Natchitoches.



# Looking Back

The Northwestern State family lost another remarkable individual last fall with the passing of Thomas P. McCullough, a 1969 graduate who distinguished himself as a lieutenant in the Vietnam War and was shot through the back in combat and left paralyzed for nearly 52 years. McCullough, 76, passed away Sept. 29, 2022, at his home in Grants Pass, Oregon, having lived decades beyond what his doctors predicted in 1970.

McCullough was born to Canadian parents in Cleveland, Ohio. He and a twin brother were the youngest of five children born in five years. His father died when he was two. His mother moved the family to Massachusetts, and he was sent to Shreveport at about age 12 to live with an uncle, aunt and two cousins. From a young age, he was involved with the Boys and Girls Club, an engagement that lasted all his life. At NSU, he was a member of Kappa Alpha Fraternity and an outstanding member of ROTC before he was commissioned into the U.S. Army Infantry Branch.

On Nov. 12-13, 1970, McCullough was serving as company commander of Company A, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry when he distinguished himself in combat near Quang Ngai. For his bravery during that conflict, he was later cited for "consistently manifesting exemplary professionalism and initiative while serving as company commander. His rapid assessment and solution of numerous problems inherent in a combat environment greatly enhanced his unit's effectiveness against a determined and aggressive enemy. He also distinguished himself on two consecutive days by heroic action and clear operations."

McCullough could not talk the Army out of organizing a program to honor him, but he chose to have the event at NSU. On Oct. 7, 1971, McCullough returned to Northwestern, where he was decorated during military ceremonies. The program took place on the university's drill field with the entire ROTC corps of cadets and the NSU Marching Band participating. Maj. Gen. C.L. Johnson presented the award from Fifth Army Headquarters in San Antonio, Texas, presenting McCullough with two Silver Stars, three Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart. At the time, he was married to Patricia Gildersleeve, whose father was a professor of military science, and they had a daughter, Patty.

McCullough was awarded two Silver Stars for heroism, three Bronze Stars for meritorious achievement and the Purple



Dr. Charles Thomas, vice president, left, adn Major General C.L. Johnson, right, congratulate Tom McCullough on Oct. 7, 1971

Heart for injuries received in Vietnam. McCullough could have received the decorations from the U.S. Army at any military installation of his choice, but he requested that the presentations be made at Northwestern. He was also honored with a luncheon in the Student Union that was attended by relatives, university officials, military personnel, Reserve Officer Training Corps cadet leaders and other special guests. NSU President Dr. Arnold Kilpatrick proclaimed the day Thomas P. McCullough Day.

Despite his permanent war injuries, McCullough moved to Oregon in 1974 to work for the VA as chief of prosthetics for the state of Oregon. He later moved to California and became a truck broker, a broker that operates between shippers and carriers and helps independent truckers find loads. He and his wife Barbara returned to Oregon in 1989, where he was involved with the Boys and Girls club and served on the organization's board of director for several years.

McCullough's wife Barbara said he maintained friendships from his college days, namely, his roommate Martial Broussard along with Gaylon Wamble, Eugene Frederick, Rick Semon, Bill LaLond, Warren Bostwick and Duan Ferrera.

## Looking Back Update

The Fall 2022 edition of Alumni Columns featured NSU's very first Homecoming Queen, Ottie Mae Duncan. Readers provided more information about her.

*I do genealogy research on my family and so, I have an Ancestry.com account. I used their search tools and found a few things about Ottie Mae:*

*First, she married James F. Daniels from Mena, Arkansas, on February 17, 1939, in Colfax, Louisiana (Grant Parish).*

*Second, she is listed with her husband in the 1940 U.S. Federal Census as residing in Alexandria, Louisiana, and her occupation is listed as Home Economics Teacher.*

*Third, I also found her and her husband in the City Directory for Alexandria, Louisiana, for 1942 and 1957. Apparently, her husband Jim became a detective with the Alexandria City Police Dept.*

*Fourth, her husband's newspaper obituary appeared in April 1974 (I assume this was in the Alexandria Daily Town Talk). His obituary listed their children as Jim Edward Daniels, Kay Daniels Kiernan and Sandy Daniels.*

*I was unable to obtain any further information, so I do not know if Ottie Mae Duncan Daniels is still living or when she may have passed.*

*Hope this helps!*

Sincerely,  
Melinda J. (Hill) Morrell  
Lt Col, USAF (Retired)  
NSU Class of 1977

\*\*\*\*

*Ottie Mae Duncan was a graduate of Bolton High School. On Friday, February 17, 1939, she married Jim Fred Daniels, a high school classmate. In 1939 Ottie Mae was a teacher at Oak Hill High School. She passed away in Alexandria in 1976 at age 58 and was survived by a son, two daughters and two grandchildren.*

William "Billy" Myers (1969), Milton

## ALUMNI **AFTER HOURS** : Spring 2023

*Save the Date!*

The NSU Alumni Association is coming to a city near you.  
Venues will be announced as details are finalized.

Visit [www.northwesternstatealumni.com](http://www.northwesternstatealumni.com) for information as it becomes available.

March 9, 2023- Austin, Texas

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March 23, 2023- Lafayette, Louisiana

March 24, 2023- Alexandria, Louisiana

April 13, 2023- New Orleans, Louisiana

April 14, 2023- Baton Rouge, Louisiana

April 20, 2023- Shreveport, Louisiana

April 21, 2023- Dallas, Texas